



West Boulevard Properties Facility Conditions Report

March 17, 2022

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

The City of Charlotte contracted with C Design with the request to evaluate the structure and systems of the retail buildings on properties located at the Southeast corner of the Remount Road and West Boulevard intersection. These parcels are identified with Tax IDs of 119-033-40 and 119-033-41, and addressed 1527 and 1533 West Boulevard, respectively.



Originally constructed in 1952 and 1950, the buildings are privately owned single story retail shops split into multiple tenants. Some are currently operational while others are undergoing renovation. The City was interested in potentially purchasing the properties for redevelopment.

C Design was asked to perform an assessment of the properties within the City's 30 day due diligence period to determine the viability of adaptive reuse. The report would be due within 23 days of the February 26th request.

### Objective

Initially, the City asked about adding on vertically as a mixed use / affordable housing development. Upon learning of the City's desire to build on to the existing structures, C Design immediately informed the City that these structures would not be capable of supporting additional floors. To meet that requirement, the most economical solution would likely demand complete demolition. With that feedback, and in the interested of obtaining input within the timeline given, the City simply requested the assessment to be limited to:

1. A summary of findings based on visual inspection with the intent for the structures to remain used as single story retail.

This report includes assessments by Architectural, Civil, Structural, Mechanical, Plumbing, and Electrical disciplines. Any further detail beyond what is included in this report can be requested for executing at a later time.

## ARCHITECTURAL SUMMARY

C Design and its consultants met to perform visual inspection of the buildings on March 2, 2022. Among the team was Stewart Engineering for structural and AME Consulting Engineers for MEP. Timmons Group was also engaged for a site assessment, performed on March 1, 2022.

### Existing Conditions

The retail spaces consist of eight (8) total tenants. General observation included:

1. Exterior conditions of the building walls
2. Patron access to the suites
3. Interior conditions of seven (7) (available) tenant suites

Rooftop access was not provided for either building and as such visual assessment of the roofing is excluded from this report. Further, a building code analysis has not been performed as part of this summary of findings, but some considerations have been reported herein.

1. Exterior walls along the frontage is made up of stucco finish and aluminum framed glazed entries. Perimeter walls elsewhere was constructed of painted concrete masonry units (CMU). The wall condition showed signs of age with some settlement cracks in the CMU and unfinished or compromised edges of the stucco finish in several instances. There were signs of attempted refinishing to the storefronts, but only surface level. The wall assembly, flashings and closure at corners and transitions are in need of attention to address water and thermal barriers.

Along the backside of the building there were signs of water stains from gutter and downspouts not functioning properly. This could be an indicator of water infiltration through the wall or roof assemblies that can further compromise the architecture and the health and safety of the public. Further investigation would need to be performed to determine the extent of impact at these instances.

The top of wall appeared to be capped with painted metal formed coping which from the ground appeared to be in fairly good condition.

2. Patron access into the storefronts were consistent with the age of this building, as evidenced by the cracked and broken up concrete paving, recessed doorways and in some cases narrow door widths. These conditions do not meet current code requirements for accessibility. Further investigation would need to be performed to determine whether or not the occupant load of each suite is being properly served for exiting purposes.

3. The interior conditions widely varied from one suite to another. In some instances the suites had been vacant for some time, others were in operation and still others were undergoing renovation. Generally, most of the finishes for the units in operation were in fairly good condition but there were instances of uneven ceiling grids and panels, broken or sagging ceiling panels, poor paint touchups, uneven flooring, and poorly installed or failing wall base. There were no instances of obvious water damaged ceilings. Refer to the structural summary for additional information pertaining to the health of these assemblies.

Toilet facilities, though appearing to be functional, were for the most part non-compliant with accessibility requirements of current code. A full building code assessment would need to be performed to assess what upgrades would be necessary, but generally it is obvious that many or all of these suites would need some level of renovation. The North Carolina Existing Building Code stipulates that for any renovations reconfiguring space, accessibility upgrades are required for up to 20% of the construction value. There may also be triggers associated with the sale of the building, or should there be a Change of Use from Retail that may require full compliance rather than 20% upgrades.



Consistent among the suites is the interior construction type that includes combustible materials (wood framed partitions, floor and roof systems), unprotected non-combustible materials in some instances of concrete slab on grade floor systems and steel wide flange beam roof framing, and no fire protection (sprinkler system). While none of these are necessarily violations of the North Carolina Building Code, a code analysis for life safety upgrades is recommended to be among the next steps in determining the extent of renovations required beyond building systems or aesthetic upgrades.

### Conclusion

For the objective of providing a summary of findings in our observations, we conclude that the buildings are capable of continuing their life in the form of a single story retail establishment. Considerable renovations will be required for the architectural systems as well as the other disciplines reporting, per their narratives herein. Evaluation of new and existing building code requirements, along with an assessment of the existing construction type and tenant separation, will all have to be performed to determine what changes are to be considered in the renovation scope.

Future development and feasibility of this Remount-West property as something other than retail can be performed with considerations for Zoning, Land Development, parking, preliminary site plans and conceptual renderings upon the request of the City.



Water stained exterior



Inaccessible toilet room



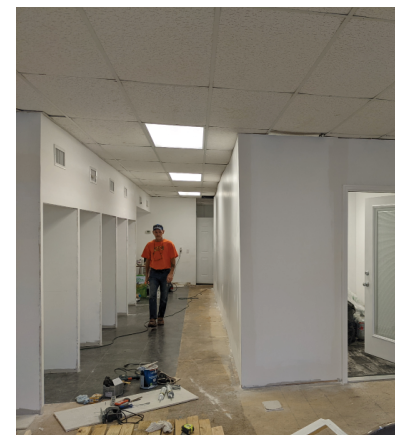
Unoccupied suite



Compromised exterior envelope



Inaccessible entrance



Suite under renovation



**Executive Summary**  
**Civil Assessment Report**  
**West Boulevard Properties – Charlotte, North Carolina**

Timmons Group performed a preliminary site assessment for a 0.541 acre +/- site located at 1527/1533 West Boulevard in the City of Charlotte, North Carolina. The property is developed with existing commercial buildings with asphalt surface parking between the front of the building and the right of way.

This assessment will identify the challenges to be addressed and managed by the client with the re-use of this property.

**Existing Planning and Zoning**

- The existing site is located within the West Boulevard Corridor Plan, dated January 1998. The plan indicates the property location to remain as a business/commercial use.
- The existing zoning of the site is B-2 (General Business District) and is properly zoned for the current use.
- Setback requirement is a minimum front setback of 20' from ROW and property lines.
- Maximum building height of 40', per B-2 zoning district.

**Existing Improvements**

- Both properties are served by asphalt parking along the front of each building with a raised concrete sidewalk access each unit of the building.
- An existing 8" sanitary sewer main is located in West Boulevard, along the north side of the roadway.
- An existing 6" water main is located in West Boulevard behind the curb along the south side of the roadway.
- The existing structures appear to drain from the rear of the building and are discharged at-grade. The site drains to the southeast corner of the property.
- Trash is collected in roll-out bins which are stored at the front corners of the building. This is likely collected through a private contract.
- The Site is accessed from West Boulevard through three (3) existing curb cuts.
- The adjacent properties to the east and west are developed commercial uses.

**Impacts, Issues and Constraints**

- Redevelopment of the property will offer several challenges particularly related to the vehicular parking as utilizing the right of way to maneuver in/out of parking spaces is no longer permitted and with the addition of a required planting strip and sidewalk along West Boulevard, there will not be sufficient space for parking between the building and right of way.

- Redevelopment would also likely increase the existing built-upon-area to maximize the use of the property and this could require stormwater management (detention and/or water quality) however, the property will be able to take advantage of mitigation options provided under the PCSO ordinance as the property is located within a 'corridor'. If stormwater management is required, it would be located underground to allow for full build-out of the property.
- The existing buildings are approximately 8,800 square feet, according to Chapter 12 of the City of Charlotte Zoning Ordinance, commercial uses have a minimum parking requirement of 1 space for every 250 square feet. This property has a parking requirement of 35 spaces, well above what is currently provided. Redevelopment of the property could require the parking to be brought into compliance.
- If the driveways are modified, the location and quantity will be dictated by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). It is likely that only one (1) driveway will be permitted.
- Underground storm detention and water quality must meet the requirements of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Stormwater Design Manual.

### **Summary**

The properties, as currently being utilized, are functioning sufficiently. The asphalt pavement is showing signs of degradation and will require patching and a sealant application in the near future to prevent further damage. The curb and gutter along the frontage is also cracked and damaged in several locations and should be repaired.



**STEWART**  
STRONGER BY DESIGN

March 15, 2022

Joe Humphrey  
Principal  
C Design  
1000 West Morehead Street, Suite 170  
Charlotte, NC 28208

Re: 1533 West Boulevard  
Charlotte, NC  
High Level Structural Existing Conditions Assessment

Dear Mr. Humphrey:

Per your request, Stewart Engineering, Inc. has visited the above referenced site. The purpose of our visit was to review the condition of the two buildings and note any damage or deterioration of the existing structure. This was a high-level assessment looking at the major structural components. A detailed distress survey was not completed. This report is intended to be used by C Design and the City of Charlotte only. No other parties should use this report without written authorization from Stewart Engineering, C Design and the City of Charlotte.

Our review was based on visual observation of the structure which was accessible at the time of our visit. We did not perform any destruction of the building to expose additional structural elements. The crawl space and the basement of the larger building were not safely accessible during our site visit. Our assessment was limited to observing and reporting the deterioration of the existing structure. We have not offered any repairs to correct the deterioration as it is not in the scope of this phase of the project, however we are available to provide those services under separate contract upon request. We did not review the original structural design of the building. The existing structural drawings were not made available.

Overall, the smaller building was in good condition and the larger building had good and poor areas. The roof of the large building was in good condition. The floors of the large building were showing significant signs of distress with some areas of the floor removed.

Both buildings were single story buildings constructed with wood construction. The buildings had 2x roof joists spanning from the front to the rear of the building with a pitch in the same direction for drainage. The joists bear on the exterior masonry walls in the front and the rear of the buildings. The buildings also have interior bearing lines which consist of either beams on columns or walls.

#### Roof Structure

As described above, the roof structure of the large building consisted of plywood sheathing spanning between roof joists. The roof joists which were exposed appeared to be sound and free of any damage. The ceilings covering the joists did not exhibit excessive water damage. The steel and wood beams supporting the joists in the interior of the building did not show any signs of distress or water damage. We didn't notice any areas of excessive deflections. Overall, the roof structure appeared to be in good condition.

The roof structure in the smaller building was not exposed in any locations. The hard ceiling covering the joists were not showing any signs of cracking from deflections or signs of water damage.





**Floor Structure**

The slab on grade floor structure for the western third of the building was not exhibiting any significant issues. We walked the floors looking for significant settling and didn't see anything of concern. The floor structure of the smaller building also appeared to be slab on grade and didn't exhibit any issues.

The middle third of the building had a crawl space structure. One of the units had the floor joists removed exposing the supporting beams, posts and piers. It was very evident that water intrusion had occurred at the floor and below level. The foundation walls were wet and the soil in the crawl space was damp. It didn't appear that the water was leaking in through the roof which means the water was coming from below and through the foundation walls.

The eastern third of the building had a basement structure due to the grade drop. We believe this area and the remaining area of floor over the crawl space were exposed to water and did not have enough ventilation. As we walked the spaces it was evident that the floors were very uneven, warped and deflected.

Any reuse of this building would require replacement of all of the elevated floor structure throughout the building. When that repair occurs the water and ventilation issue will need to be resolved to prevent damage in the future.

**Wall Structure**

We walked the perimeter of the building looking for distress in the exterior walls. There were some cracks evident throughout the building, but none were a structural concern. The cracks appeared to be caused by shrinkage and minor settling of the building over time. Reuse construction of the building should include pointing the masonry walls to ensure long term structural integrity and a dry building envelope. The front of the building was covered and should be reviewed around lintels and supports to ensure there is not excessive cracking in those areas. We did not notice any movement or areas of concern during our visit.

**Summary**

As discussed, the roof and wall structures for both buildings were in good condition. The slab on grade structure did not exhibit any areas of concern. The elevated floor structure, which occurs in two thirds of the building should be replaced. The water intrusion and ventilation issue in the basement and crawl spaces needs to be addressed.

Sincerely yours,

Christopher R. Herron, P.E.  
Structural Practice Leader





Picture #1 – Rear Exterior Wall



Picture #2 – Eastern Exterior Wall



Picture #3 – Minor Cracking



Picture #4 – Minor Cracking





Picture #5 – Lintel Rust and Cracks



Picture 6 – Front Wall





Picture #7 – Front Knee Wall



Picture 8 – Crawl Space with Removed Floor



Picture #9 – Crawl Space with Removed Floor



Picture #10 – Roof Structure





Picture #11 – Roof Beam Supporting Roof Joists



## City of Charlotte West Blvd. Properties

### INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT REPORT

#### GENERAL EXISTING CONDITIONS

On March 2nd, 2022 the AME field survey team examined 1527 and 1533 West Blvd in Charlotte, NC, both of which make up a single multi-retail complex (see Figure 1). 1527 West Blvd. contains three retail spaces and 1533 contains five retail spaces. The survey team was able to access the site perimeter, along with seven of the eight total spaces in the complex.



Figure 1 - Site Plan

#### MECHANICAL EXISTING CONDITIONS

Two units in the complex are conditioned by packaged direct expansion (DX) units located behind the building. Ductwork from these units rises at the exterior of the building prior to entering the building. Four of the retail spaces are conditioned with DX split systems. The condensing units are located behind the building. The indoor



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units are located in the mechanical rooms in each unit of the building. One of the building's retail spaces is used as a kitchen. The kitchen hood exhaust fan is located on the roof of the building and kitchen make up air fan is located on the side of the building. One of the units does not have any associated HVAC systems.

## MECHANICAL SUMMARY

The air handling units are in operational condition. The condensing units are covered with branches and need to be cleaned and cleared. The packaged units outside are dented and damaged. The ductwork is in need of repairs. The ductwork inside the building should be cleaned or replaced. Some of the indoor units appear to be older and might require replacement in the near future.

While the systems are generally operational, they are approaching the end of their statistical life and should be considered for replacement in near future.

## PLUMBING EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing domestic water supply is fed off of the West Blvd side of the complex. Each building has its own meter and valve box in the front of the complex. All domestic water piping appears to be PEX type piping on the interior to the building. Each retail space has their own electric water heaters.

The existing sanitary piping serving the buildings appears to be primarily PVC piping with the exception of some cast iron that was in the unfinished retail space of the complex. Sanitary piping comes from the West Blvd side of the building.

## PLUMBING SUMMARY

The domestic water interior to the building appears to be in good condition. The existing water heaters appear to be in good condition.

The existing meter boxes outside the building are in poor condition. These are full of debris and one is damaged.

The sanitary PVC piping appears to be in fair condition. The sanitary cast iron piping appears to be in poor condition and in need of replacement.

## ELECTRICAL EXISTING CONDITIONS

Each retail space's 240/120V split-phase electric service is fed from individual meters located around the perimeter of the building. These meters are fed by utility poles; three poles are located on West Blvd. and a fourth is located near the rear of the building. A single electrical distribution panel is located in each retail space, with main breakers ranging from 100 to 60 amps. The panels distribute power to various lighting fixtures, mechanical equipment, and receptacles associated with light commercial loads.



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Site lighting is provided by a combination of fixtures mounted to the utility poles, as well as wall-packs installed in the front of the building. Interior lighting is provided by troffers installed in ceiling tiles or surface-mounted lights. These fixtures are a mix of LED and fluorescent tubes.

There is no centralized fire alarm system, nor individual systems in any of the retail spaces.

## **ELECTRICAL SUMMARY**

All of the electrical service feeds are in good condition; the feeders from the poles are clear of tree limbs or any other obstructions. The majority of the retail spaces' distribution panels are in good condition; however, one unit's panel (currently occupied by 'SonicTax') is past its service life and will need to be replaced in the near future. Each panel schedule needs to be updated to show their connected loads.

Although the site lighting was not lit during the survey (which occurred in the daytime), the fixtures do not appear to be damaged and are in good condition. Half of the interior lighting fixtures are in good condition, while the other half are in fair or poor condition and will need to be replaced in the near future.